

(Washington, DC)— Congresswoman Gwen Moore (D-Wisc.) today announced that Asha Family Services Inc in Milwaukee will receive \$250,000 to provide housing assistance to the victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. These funds are intended for victims who are homeless, in need of transitional housing or other housing assistance, and for whom emergency shelter services and other crisis intervention services are unavailable or insufficient.

“The services provided by nonprofit organizations like Asha Family Services are absolutely critical to providing a path for victims of domestic violence to escape from dangerous situations that could end up costing them their homes, their livelihood and their lives,” Congresswoman Moore said. “As we recognized the 15th anniversary of the Violence Against Women Act this week, my colleagues and I were reminded of the important role of supportive services for victims of domestic violence, which the 1994 bill helped make possible.

“Domestic violence against a partner or a child – whether physical or emotional – is simply not OK. No one should be forced – out of fear or lack of resources – to remain in a situation where they are at risk – and we need organizations like Asha Family Services to help these individuals find a way to safety.”

Asha will lease furnished, private living units for up to 24 months to provide safe housing for victims of domestic abuse, sexual violence, dating violence and stalking. In addition, Asha will operate sites to provide job training, work experience and job development for the individuals who are living in transitional housing. These nonprofit job training sites include a coffee shop and deli and a nail and hair salon. In addition to training, these nonprofit enterprises will also provide stipends to participants.

“We are so excited and I am truly thankful for receiving a Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women grant award,” said Antonia Vann, CEO of Asha Family Services. “This grant is so very important to us at this time because we know it will save lives! Nationally we are in the midst of a critically ‘downed’ economy, which is empirically linked with an increase in violence and abuse in the home.

“Locally, the number of victims seeking services, particularly for safe housing has risen, while resources have continued to dwindle. Subsequently we were forced to reduce our services and have not been able to meet the demand. With these dollars, we are able to increase the availability of domestic abuse victim services and safe housing which provides a critical option

that was very limited for victims in Milwaukee – particularly those of color with children who are faced with the choice between homelessness and living with a violent partner.”

In 2007, Asha Family Services also received a transitional housing grant, which allowed them to provide a total of 11,962 bed night stays for 31 victims of domestic violence and their children from October 2007 to December 2008.

In addition to supporting the need for safe, longer-term transitional housing, Asha Family Services also works to provide an Individualized Plan of Care for victims of domestic violence that is driven by the individual's specific needs. These may include housing, case management, supportive services, mentoring, employment training and/or job opportunity services.

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